Agrarians to lead symposium

Robert Penn Warren, Andrew Lytle and Lyle Lanier — the three surviving Agrarians — will participate in a symposium titled "I'll Take My Stand — Fifty Years After" October 30 - November 1 at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.

The Agrarian movement of the 1930s advocated the preservation of Southern culture and warned against the possible harmful effects on society of heavy industrialization.

Warren, Lytle and Lanier each contributed an essay to "I'll Take My Stand," the Agrarian manifesto published in 1930. At the time of its publication, the book was felt by many readers to be a blueprint for social and political action in the South and the nation.

The book received much negative criticism and passed out of print for more than 20 years. Issues such as deteriorating quality of life in America and destruction of the environment were raised in the book, and their relevance in contemporary society have caused scholars to reexamine I'll Take My Stand, which is back in print.

Warren, Lytle and Lanier will participate in a panel discussion about the Agrarian movement, I'll Take My Stand, the response to the book at the time of its publication and the relevance of the book to many of today's cultural, political and environmental problems.

Cleanth Brooks, Gray professor of rhetoric, emeritus, at Yale University and internationally known literary critic will moderate the panel discussion. Other participants in the program will be John Sheldon Reed, sociologist at the University of North Carolina; Charles Roland, historian at the University of Kentucky; and Robert B. Heilman, professor of English, emeritus, at the University of Washington.

Louis D. Rubin of the University of North Carolina, Lewis P. Simpson of Louisiana State University and George Core of the University of the South — distinguished literary critics and American cultural historians — also will participate in the event.

The symposium will begin 2:00 p.m. Thursday, October 30, at Vanderbilt University, with sessions at 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Friday, October 31. Warren, Lytle and Lanier will participate in the panel discussion 9:00-11:00 a.m. Saturday, November 1.